

REFLECTIONS

On the PAPERS

Deliver'd by Mr. *Charnock*, Mr. *King*, and Mr. *Key*,

To the SHERIFFS,

On the Day of their Execution.

Mr. CHERNOCK's Paper.

THAT I might avoid distractions, and be Compos'd as much as possible at the time of my Execution, I thought it much more proper to Communicate This to the Sheriffs, than to give myself the Uneasiness of speaking, leaving it to them to publish (if they should think convenient) for the Satisfaction of the World; and in what I have to say, I have taken as much care as I could to be short, that I might not lose time in my greatest Concern.

As concerning an Invasion intended by King *James* upon *England*, and that there was certain Intelligence of it from Abroad, I presume every body was satisfied; and to the facilitating of which, I own that my self and some others did agree upon the Undertaking, to Attack the Prince of *Orange* and his Guards, for which I am now to Suffer; but I think my self obliged by all the Tyes imaginable, both of Conscience and Honour, to declare, That as for any Order or Commission of King *James's* for Assassinating the Prince of *Orange*, I neither saw, nor knew of any; but have had frequent Assurances of his having rejected such Proposals when they have been Offer'd.

I confess I did hear, that there was a Commission arriv'd for Levying of War, and which was natural to believe, if the King was in such a readiness to come over as was reported; but if there was any such Authority as that, I declare I never saw it.

As to what regards the Body of the *Roman Catholics*, I must do them this Justice, and which I dare be positive in, That they had no manner of Knowledge of this Design, nor do I believe it was Communicated to any other Party of such as are reputed the King's Friends, but carried on merely by a small Number, without the Advice, Consent, or Privy of any Parties whatsoever.

I ask forgiveness of all the World for what Offences or Injuries I have done to them; and I am (I bless Almighty God) in perfect Charity with all Mankind.

Robert Chernocke.

Mr.

Mr. KING's Paper.

I Am now within a few Moments of Eternity, brought to this Place by the Just Hand of God in Punishment of all my Crimes ; but particularly of that, of which I have been lately Arraign'd, and for which I stand here Condemn'd ; but I hope, that Goodness of God, which has given me a Sense of my Wickedness, will accept my Repentance, and shew Mercy on me ; which I hope to obtain through the Passion and Merits of my Redeemer, upon whom I entirely cast my Self.

And that I may find his Mercy, I think my self oblig'd to do Justice to my Neighbour, that so none may suffer wrongfully on my account ; and therefore as I am soon to answer the Truth of what I say before the Tribunal of God.

I First declare, That I never saw any Order or Commission of King James's promoting the Assassination for which I am Condemn'd : Neither do I know of any such Order or Commission.

Secondly, That this Design was not undertaken with any General Knowledge or Approbation of any Body of Men, either Catholick or Protestant.

Lastly, That I did not engage in it on Presumption of any King-Killing Principles that cou'd justify such an Undertaking, but was drawn into it by my own Rashness and Passion, for which and all other Sins I heartily beseech God to forgive me.

And I hope, that such who think the Misfortune of their Imprisonment or Trouble, is deriv'd from my having been engag'd in this Enterprize, or such to whom it has any ways given Scandal, that they will admit me to their Pardon, as I freely and heartily forgive all Mankind. In this Disposition of a sincere Repentance and true Charity, I commend my Soul into the Hands of God, and hope to find Mercy from him. And for this I beg all your Prayers.

Ed. King.

Mr. KEY's Paper.

I Am now going to appear before the Living God ; I trust in his Mercy, that he will forgive all my Sins committed to this last Moment of my Life. God is just in all his Judgments, and I accept of this Death as the Punishment of my Iniquities : I forgive all my Enemies, and hope through a hearty Repentance, and the Merits of my Saviour, to obtain Mercy.

Have Mercy on me, O Father of Mercy, and through thy only Son forgive me all my Sins.

Thomas Key.

REFLECTIONS, &c.

IT is no easy task to offer Reflections on what was deliver'd by Men who were to answer it very soon after, at a great and just Tribunal. But since the observations, that do Naturally occur from the reading these Papers, lie heavier on the Cause, and Party, and their Religion, and Principles, than on the Persons of these unhappy Men, I think it is a Charity to the Publick to help all readers to re-examine them with due attention ;

tion; and to make these Remarks on them, which are so Just and Obvious, that even those, who might read them too hastily, and with too much partiality to observe them at first, will be forc'd to acknowledge, on a second reading, they are Native and Genuine, without putting any Force or Strain on them.

1. Mr. Charnock and Mr. King do both confess the *Fact*, and so they have Establish'd the Credit of the Witnesses; but with remarkable difference, that Mr. King owns that *God had given him a sense of his Wickedness*, and acknowledges the *Just Hand of God in his Punishment for that Crime in particular*, and so desires to find *Mercy* at his Hand. But Mr. Charnock seems not to think so hardly of his share in that design; he mentions it without any Words condemning it, or importing that he had repented of it; So it is plain he thought it was no Sin. It is as plain that his *Confessor* thought so too. For as no Man, who knows the Principles of that Religion, will believe that he would die without Absolution, so no Priest, who thought it a Mortal Sin, could give him Absolution, without obliging him to confess the Guilt, as well as the Fact. And, since he has not done that, we may well conclude, that his Priest thought it was no Sin, and so thought him oblig'd to make no other Confession, but what might cover the Party. *Key* says nothing at all of the matter; but a Criminal who dies without denying that, for which he is Condemn'd, is presum'd to confess it.

2. Both Mr. Charnock and Mr. King deny that they saw or knew of any Order or Commission of King James, for the *Assassination*. Mr. Charnock adds, *that he has had frequent Assurances of his having rejected such proposals when they have been offered*. It is no great Honour to a Prince, that any dare make such proposals to him. We have a King who would treat any that should make such Proposals to Him in such a manner, as should for ever discourage the attempt for the future. When these are frequently made, it seems the thing is liked, tho' the methods may not be approv'd of, or the time not thought proper. To be often solicited is no Character of a severe Virtue.

But, what is here denied? An Order or Commission for *Assassination*. This was never affirmed, nor so much as suspected. The word *Assassination* is too hard to be put in any Princes Orders or Commissions. But a Commission to *Attack the Prince of Orange* (as he calls him) in his Winter Quarters, Or to *Seize his Person and to fight his Guards*, or to levy War against the Person of the Prince of Orange in England, by all ways and means (after which manner we are told, the Witnesses express themselves) This is not denied by Mr. Charnock, therefore it may be presumed that it is confess'd by him; and the denial of this would have agreed better with the words that go before, in which he owns the *Undertaking to attack the Prince of Orange and his Guards*. Now the natural close of this Period ought to have been (if it had Consisted with Truth) that he neither saw nor knew of any Order or Commission from King James for that *Undertaking*. But he changes the word, and puts *Assassinating* instead of it. It is plain, Mr. Charnock and Mr. King, both had a mind to clear King James as far as they could. But tho' their Confessor might bring them to prevaricate and to use art in the choice of their last words, yet they would not dye with a plain lye in their mouths. A Commission to *Attack the Prince of Orange*, was what was mentioned in the deposition. That is not denied by them, and therefore it is presumed to be confess'd. But, tho' the *Undertaking to Attack the Prince of Orange and his Guards*, is not in express words, a Commission to *Assassinate* him; yet it were suspecting of any Man's weakness too much to go about to prove, that both in effect are one and the same thing. When the Evidence is made publick, it will then appear what the depositions were, and whether the Protellations that are made in these Papers, do contradict them or not. In the mean time here is a poor pretence; for the party to give out that the Offenders dyed clearing King James

of any Order or Accession to this matter. They do indeed deny an Order for an *Assassination*, which was not in the Depositions, but they do not deny a Commission for *Attacking his Person*, which was mentioned in them. They had a mind to say all they could say, but durst not say all that was necessary for the wiping off so black an imputation.

3. Mr. Charnock confesses that he heard of a *Commission for Levying of War*, tho' he declares *he never saw it*; in which he does not contradict the Evidence, but he studies to represent this as consisting with the design of King James's coming over, and as of a peace with it. He does not explain the nature of this Commission, nor contradict the Evidence that was given against himself in this particular. The Artifice here is a little too gross not to be easily observed. He has already answered for it and I will urge it no more.

4. It may be easily imagin'd that some Persons were careful enough to put them in mind to justify the whole party, but more particularly the Roman Catholics, and to purge them of any knowledge of this design or accession to it. Nobody can imagine a design of this nature was to be talked of about the Town, or to be Communicated to more than those who were to be in some manner concerned in it, but it cannot be doubted, but that the Party had it among them, that an overturning of the present constitution was very near, and very certain; of this so many Indications broke out, deliver'd with such an air of assurance, and in so many different ways and methods, that tho' the party is known to be very Sanguine (I am sorry that this word belongs to him in both senses) yet there seem'd to be somewhat on this occasion, that shew'd they depended upon that which was more infallible than an Invasion, for that was to turn on two such unsteady Elements, as the Winds and the Seas, that they must be very Sanguine indeed, if they could be so positive in a thing that was under so many uncertainties. The Assurances with which his design was Published in all parts beyond the Seas. The Triumphs that were made upon it, as so well laid, that it could not fail. And the Medals prepared for the perpetuating the Memory of it, which without such help is not like to be soon forgot will be upon an other occasion, laid open with so much light as will silence all the Contradiction of the most impudent of the Party. One thing is evident, that if the Party had not at least so much warning given them, as to be ready upon that dismal Signal to run together, and to see to their own preservation, at least till the *French* had landed; it was certainly the most barbarous exposing of them all to the Fury of the Mob that could have been imagined, for it is not to be doubted, but that if they had succeeded in that Black design of Assassinating the King, or as Mr. Charnock words it, of *Attacking the Prince of Orange and his Guards*, It would have inflamed the Spirit of the Nation to that degree, that the party if it had not been well prepar'd and fortifi'd would have been quickly Sacrific'd in that height of Fury to which so inhumane a Crime must have transported both City and Country. But how Black and Cruel soever these designs against the King, and all his faithful Subjects might have been. Yet we may suppose, they took more care of their own Friends and Party, and that there was warning enough given them, but in what manner that was done, must be refer'd to the succeeding Trials, in which there can be little difficulty, since the Truth of the design is now become evident beyond the possibility of Contradiction.

5. Mr. King Vindicates himself from *King-Killing Principles*, and Honestly puts this on his own *Rashness and Passions*. Mr. Charnock it seems was not within the reach of this, for he thought the King was indeed no King, and so calls him only the *Prince of Orange*; but it is left to others to Judge what difference there is between those who think that *King William* is not a King, and those who think that he is *King de Facto*, yet he has no Right, no not so much as by *Law* to be King.